

Future Faith

Challenge #1:
Revitalizing Withering Congregations
September 22, 2019



Facilitator: Dr. Greg Smith

Agenda

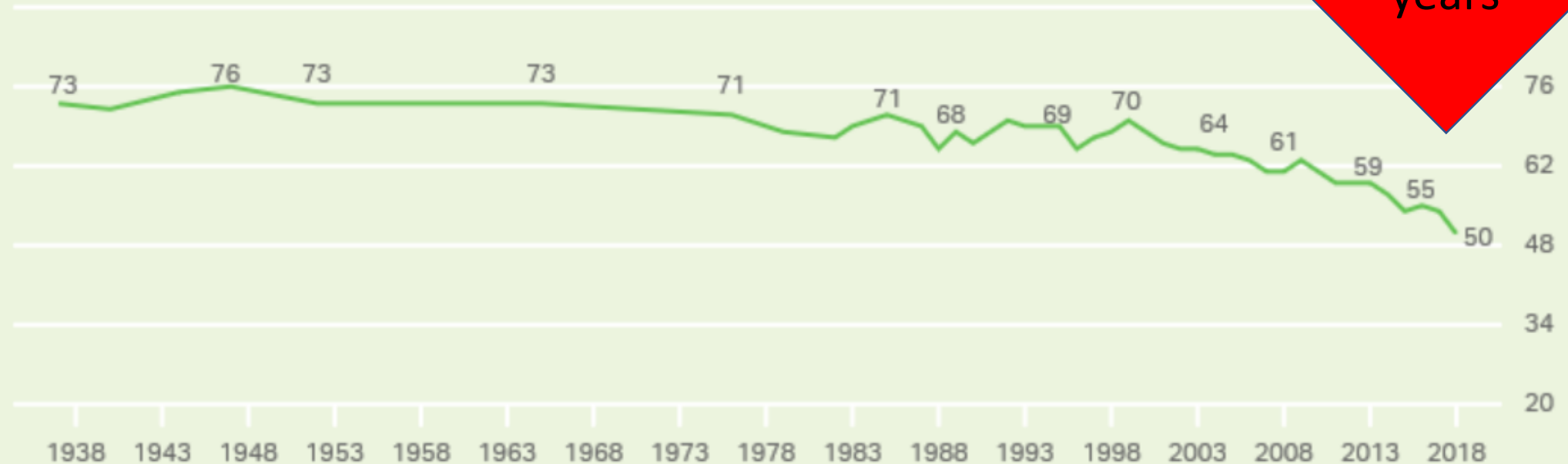
- Announcements, Attendance, & Prayer
- A Lifetime of Christian Decline in the US
- Examples of Christian Growth Beyond the US
- Preliminary Thoughts About Revitalization

Declining Membership (USA)

Church Membership Among U.S. Adults Has Declined, Especially in the Past 20 Years

Do you happen to be a member of a church, synagogue or mosque?

■ % Yes, member



-20%
in 20
years

Based on annual aggregated data, usually based on two surveys

GALLUP

Declining Membership (PCUSA)

PC(USA) Membership

1983

(merger of UPCUSA and PCUS)

3,121,238

2018

1,352,678

35 years = 56% decline



“To say the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is deathly ill is not editorializing but acknowledging reality.”

– letter from 45 large church pastors (2011)

Smaller & Smaller American Churches



Westchester Congregational Church (est. 1728)
Colchester, CT



West Fork Presbyterian Church (est. 1870)
Grand Prairie, TX

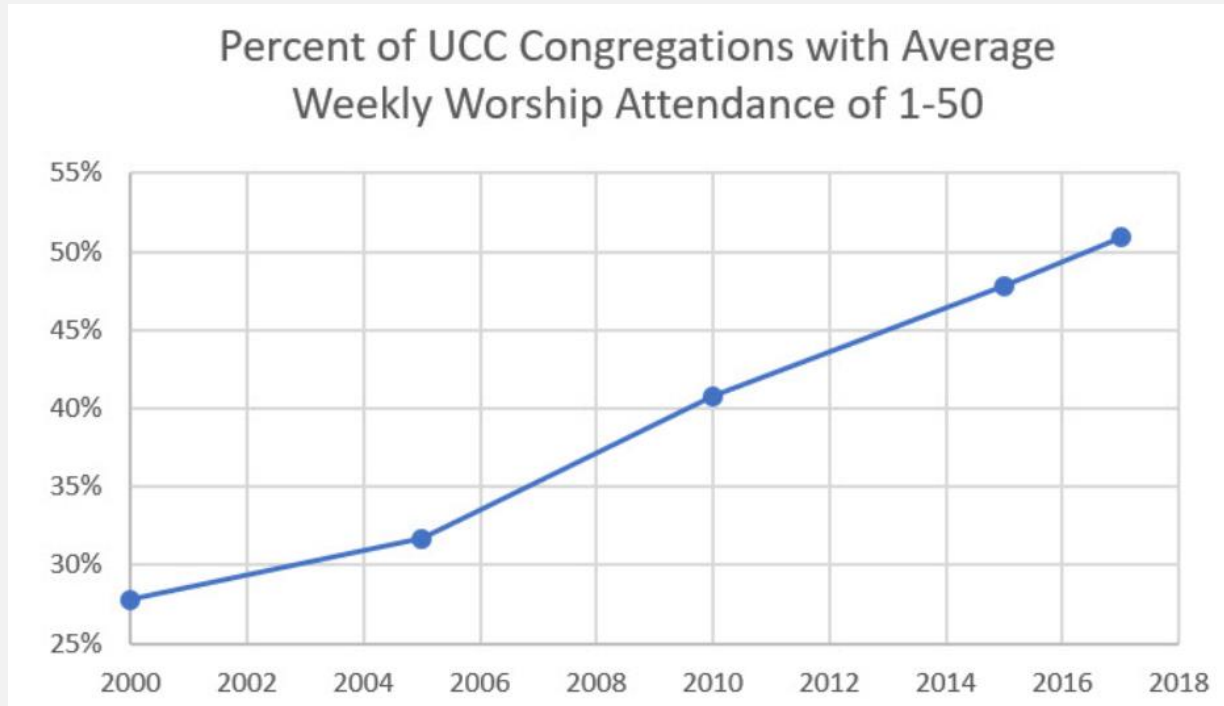
Smaller & Smaller: Select Stats

Episcopal

There are now more parishes with an average attendance of less than 10 than there are parishes with attendance greater than 300.

Another Decade of Major Decline in The Episcopal Church.

(So What Faith. September 7, 2019)



Majority of UCC Congregations Worship 50 or Fewer.

(So What Faith. February 14, 2019)

Median Worship Attendance

2010: 105

2015: 80

Faith Communities Today 2015.

(Future Faith, p.9)

Fewer & Fewer American Churches

30-40% will close in the next 30 years
-Scott Thumma (Future Faith, p.8)

1-2% close every year



St. Barnabas Episcopal (Denton, TX)



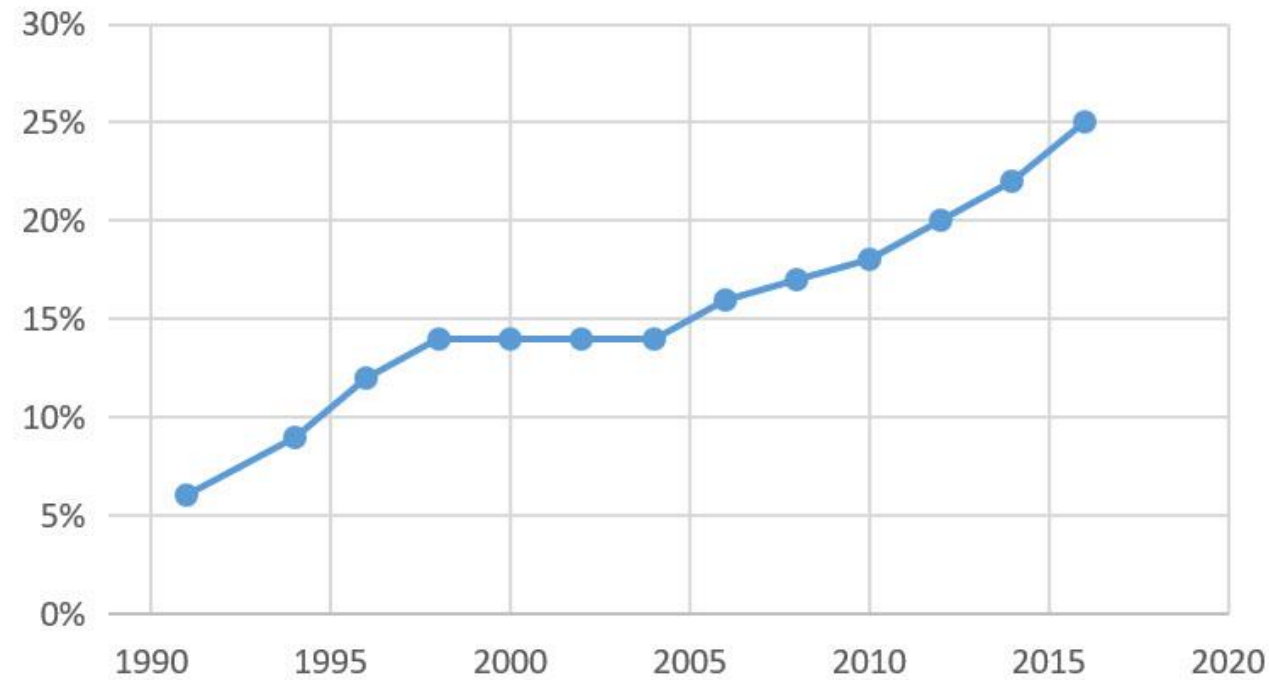
Are 10,00 Churches Closing Every Year?
(So What Faith. September 4, 2019)

Rise of the American “Nones”

1 in 4

1 in 5

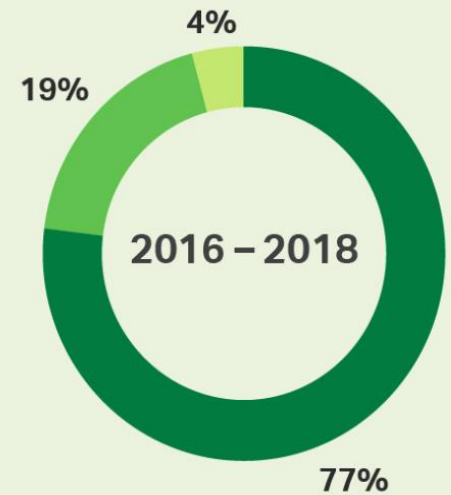
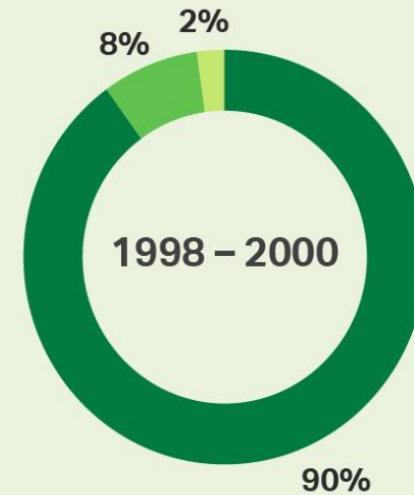
Religiously Unaffiliated Adults, USA
Percent of Population



[Religiously Unaffiliated: 25 Years of Growth](#)
(So What Faith. October 10, 2016)

U.S. Religious Affiliation

■ % With a religion ■ % No religion ■ % Don't know/Refused



GALLUP

[U.S. Church Membership Down Sharply in Past Two Decades](#)
(Jeffrey Jones, April 18, 2019)

Global Christianity: Projected Growth

Size and Projected Growth of Major Religious Groups

	2010 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2010	PROJECTED 2050 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2050	POPULATION GROWTH 2010-2050
Christians	2,168,330,000	31.4%	2,918,070,000	31.4%	749,740,000
Muslims	1,599,700,000	23.2	2,761,480,000	29.7	1,161,780,000
Unaffiliated	1,131,150,000	16.4	1,230,340,000	13.2	99,190,000
Hindus	1,032,210,000	15.0	1,384,360,000	14.9	352,140,000
Buddhists	487,760,000	7.1	486,270,000	5.2	-1,490,000
Folk Religions	404,690,000	5.9	449,140,000	4.8	44,450,000
Other Religions	58,150,000	0.8	61,450,000	0.7	3,300,000
Jews	13,860,000	0.2	16,090,000	0.2	2,230,000
World total	6,895,850,000	100.0	9,307,190,000	100.0	2,411,340,000

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Bigger & Bigger in Seoul, Korea



Myungsung Church

100,000 Members
(Future Faith, p.13)



Yoido Full Gospel Church

820,000 Members
(Future Faith, p.15)

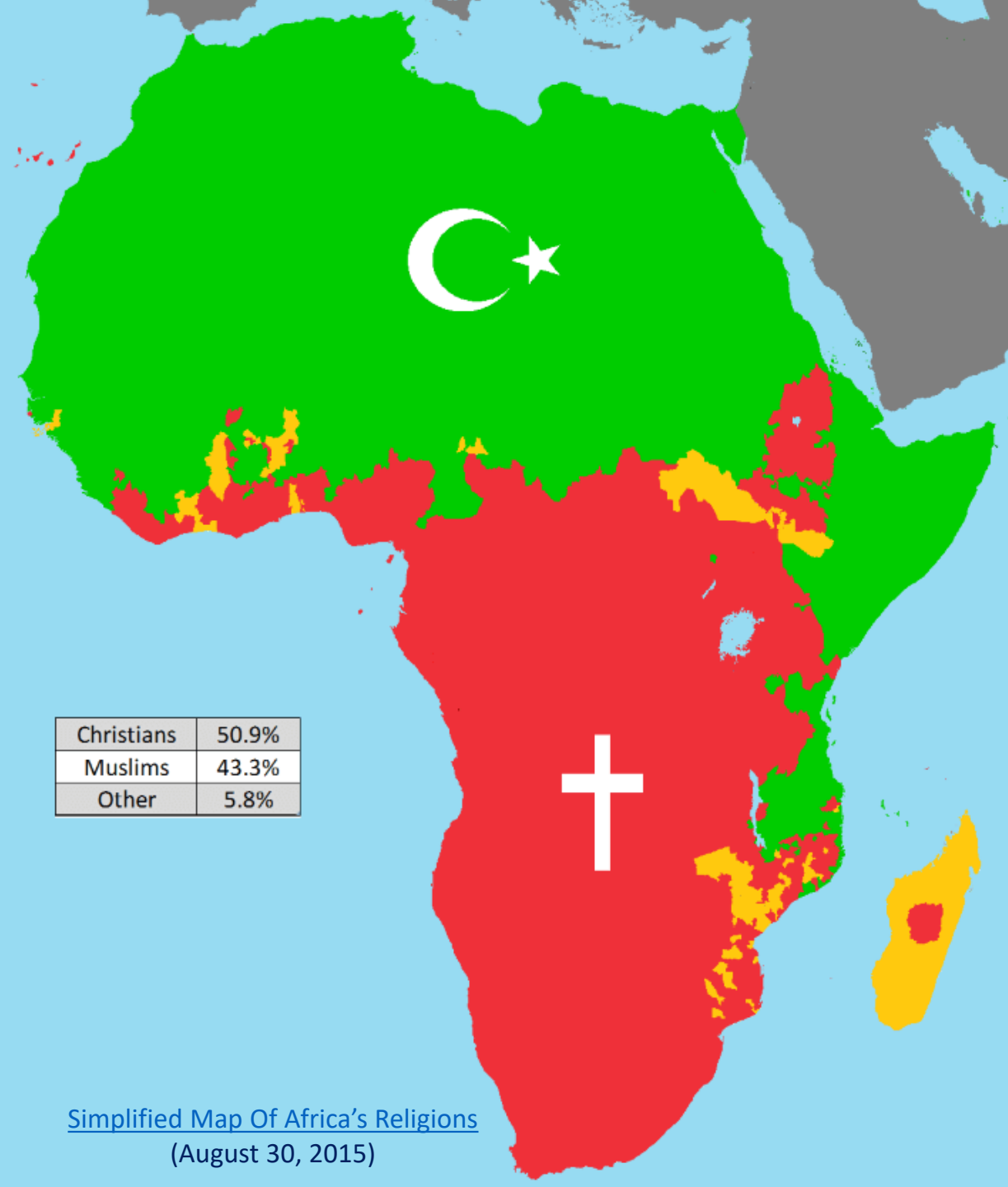
Africa

Christianity has grown from
less than 10% to 50%
over the last 100 years

(Future Faith, p.17)

Today, 1 out of 4 Christians in
the world is an African.

(Future Faith, p.17)

A map of Africa showing religious distribution. The northern part is green with a white crescent and star, representing Islam. The southern and central parts are red with a white cross, representing Christianity. There are yellow and orange patches scattered across the continent, representing other religions. A table in the bottom left corner provides the percentages for each category.

Christians	50.9%
Muslims	43.3%
Other	5.8%

Glocal – Migration & More



2/3 of migrants coming
to the US are Christian

(Future Faith, p.19)

The world is increasingly
experienced glocally

Toward Revitalization in America



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